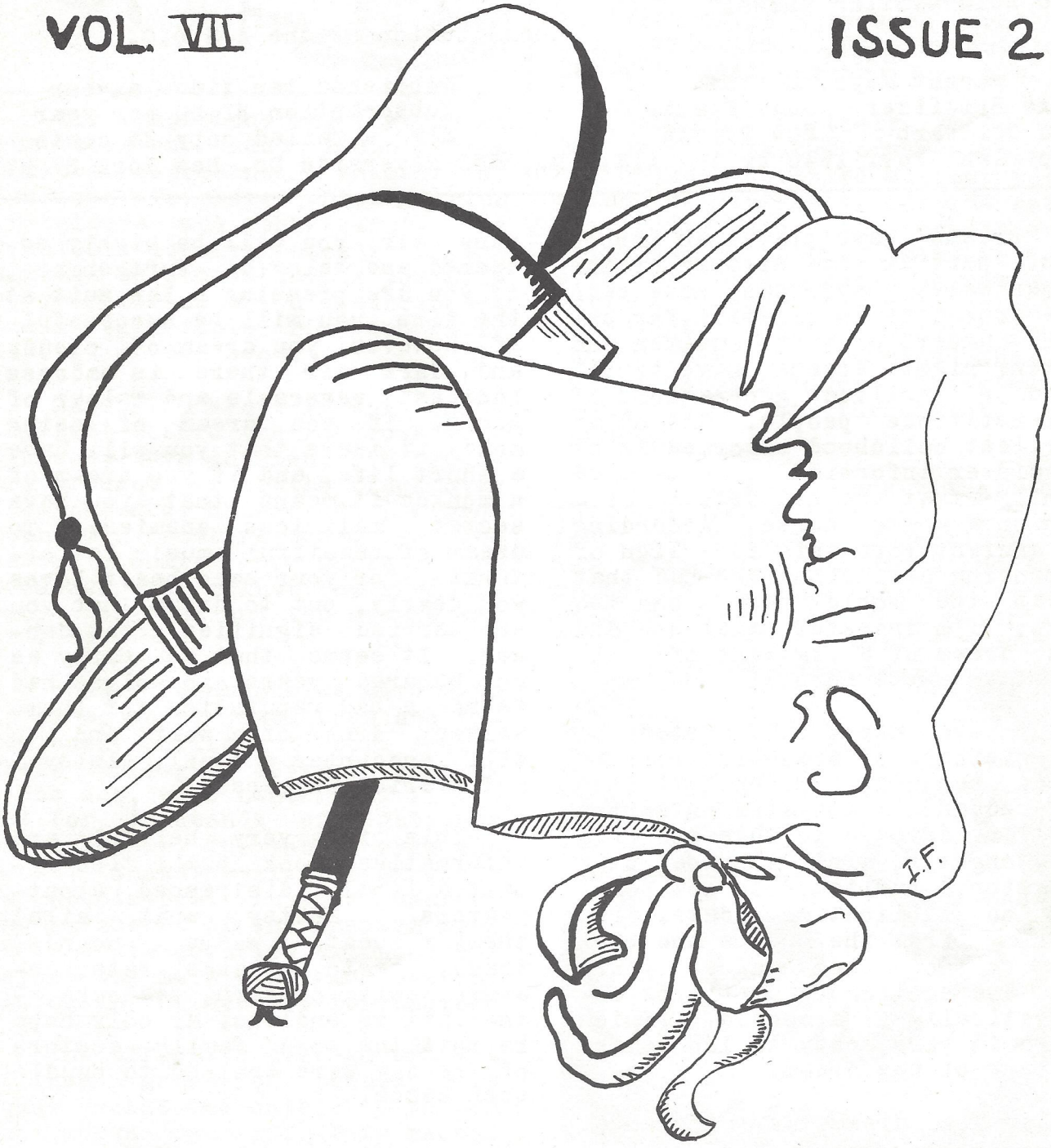
# PROMENADE

## A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN FOLKLORE

VOL. VII ISSUE 2




The American Square Dance Group

New York, N.Y.

# PROMENADE

"The purpose of the American Square Dance Group is to make available those rich stores of native dance, music, and general Americana which comprise American folk culture; to conduct activities without regard for race, creed, color or social position; to cooperate with those who hold similar views."

Constitution of the A.S.D.G.

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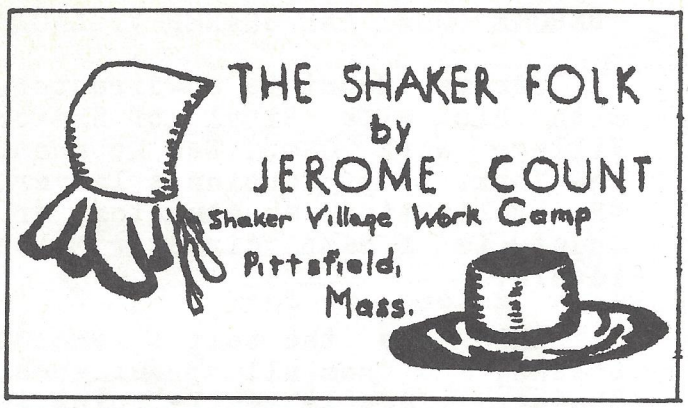
Dreams have played an important part in the history of the human race. Daydreams have been the source of inspiration for untold numbers of ambitious men and women; night dreams have terrified or thrilled generations of superstitious people. One of my earliest childhood memories is of my sister informing our startled family that she had dreamed of a man on a white horse. According to ancient lore this is a sign of impending war. Since she had that dream the world has known two wars; I'm thankful that she did not dream of a regiment of soldiers on white horses!

I have never made a study of the history of dream-interpretations, but quite recently I discovered an old songster an entire section devoted to this science. The songster, The American Star Songster, published in New York, has no publication date. But judging from the songs the book must be about one hundred years old. The section of dreams is alphabetically arranged, which makes it very easy to locate the meaning of any dream.

Do you dream, for instance, about air? Probably not, but if you do, and if it is clear, serene air you will be highly esteemed and beloved. Furthermore, if you are pressing a law suit at the time you will be successful. If, however, you dream of cloudy and dark air there is sadness business reversals and a loss of goods. If you dream of losing money it means that you will have a short life, and if you dream of a monkey it means that you have secret, malicious enemies. To dream of beautiful music is fortunate, for your sweetheart loves you dearly, but to dream that you are married signifies great danger. It seems that as early as one hundred years ago wolves had earned a bad reputation for themselves; dream of a wolf and you will encounter a cruel, disloyal and avaricious person.

This is a very helpful and informative book but I find myself a little distressed about-Heavens to Betsy, what ailed them? - wheat, wasps, wounds, toads, teeth, snakes, rats, oranges, owls, oysters, peacocks, - the list is endless. My only hope is that the good family doctors of the day were trained to handle such cases.

Margot Mayo




The traditions and history of the religious sect known as the Shakers represent a segment of American folklore which is rich in culture and achievement. The greatest accomplishments of the Shakers were made during the fifty year period which occurred between the rapid rise and early decline of the sect.

Shakerism arose in this country just before the American Revolution, when Ann Lee, its founder, brought her little flock over from England. Mother Ann Lee propounded a doctrine based upon the second coming of Christ. She preached the principles of celibacy, pacifism and the simple way of life.

Shaker communities were made up of communal dwellings and ingeniously efficient work shops. These villages, several generations ago, were centers of interest for thousands of sightseers and tourists. The public even attended Shaker religious services as spectators. In this manner, the influence of the Shakers upon their contemporaries extended far beyond the mere 6,000 members included in the sect at its peak.

The effective self-government of thes group of people gave equal voice and authority to men and women members. They raised communal industry and housekeeping to the level of highly developed arts. Their communal organizations resulted in almost self-sufficient economic groups, basically agricultural, but leading to all types of industry and creative crafts. In these latter fields the Shakers displayed inventive ability by such creditable industrial developments as Babbitt metal and the buzz saw.

Because of their religious ban on superfluous ornamentation, the Shakers created cabinet work which is remarkable for its rare simplicity and fine craftsmanship. Asense of pure mass in design became a common characteristic of Shaker products no matter what Shaker community produced them. The famous Shaker rocker and straight chair were found in homes throughout the country.

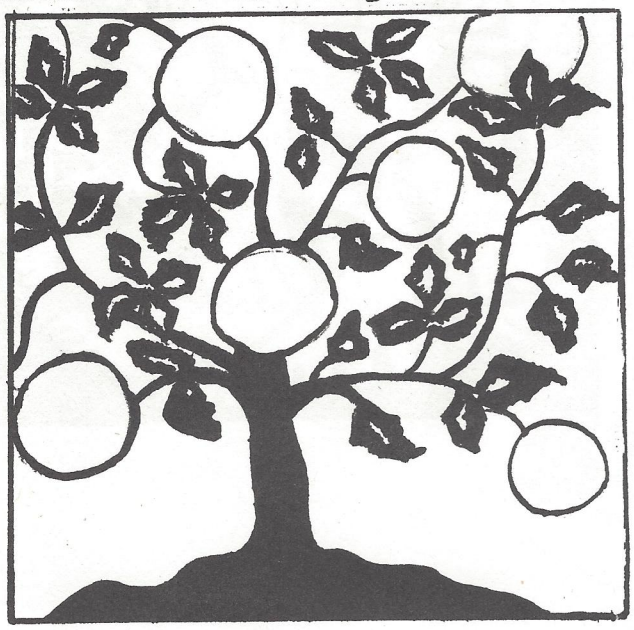
The dance and song rituals of the Shakers form a particularly fascinating study for folklorists and students. The songs and the group dances were originally developed from the folk material which the early converts brought

with them as part of their memories of "worldly life." Many recognizable folk songs are to be found among the songs used in the religious meetings of the Shakers, and the dance-rituals bear a striking resemblance to some of the group folk dances of both our country and England.

Out of the mass of literature to be found in public and private collections, much of it written by the Shakers themselves, there may emerge some clue to the decline of a people so favored by talent and devotion. The usual explanation ascribed to the decline is the advance of mechanical production and the inability to recruit converts to the rigorous religious doctrines of The United Society of Believers in Christ's Second Appearing.

A more comprehensive view might ascribe the decline to an irresistable wave of reaction against the intense spirit of emotional revivalism which gave birth to Shakerism and decreased with it.

The Shakers themselves feel simply that "the gift is gone." Whatever the explanation for the importance and gradual disappearance of the Shakers, the rich reservoir of their folklore remains to be investigated.



## JEROME COUNT AND SHAKER VILLAGE

Jerome Count is co-director, with his wife Sibyl, of Shaker Village Work Camp, New Lebanon, New York. By profession a lawyer, by inclination an educator, Mr. Count is a camp director with ideals.

This was the camp's second season, and from all appearances, Shaker Village is really going to accomplish the things many of us dream of. It is the aim of the camp to enable the teen-age campers to experience a rich and varied type of community living, with manual work balancing creative cultural activities.

Members of the American Square Dance Group have an active interest in Shaker Village Work Camp. Johnny O'Leary, our caller-in-chief, Hal Aks, our singing-master, Stuart Jamieson, president of the A.S.D.G., and Margot were all members of the staff of this camp, and many of our new members came to us from Shaker Village. We all feel that the camp will, in due time, become a folklore center where the arts will be an integral part of community life.

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## FOLKLORE ON THE AIR

New York City station WNEW is presenting a series of broadcasts entitled, "A Treasury of American Folklore," under the direction of Ted Cott. It consists of dramatizations taken from Ben Botkin's book Treasury of American Folklore. This program may be heard every Tuesday evening at nine o'clock.

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## "NEW" OLD SONGS

Hargail Music Press will soon publish seven early American four part songs from Margot's collection.

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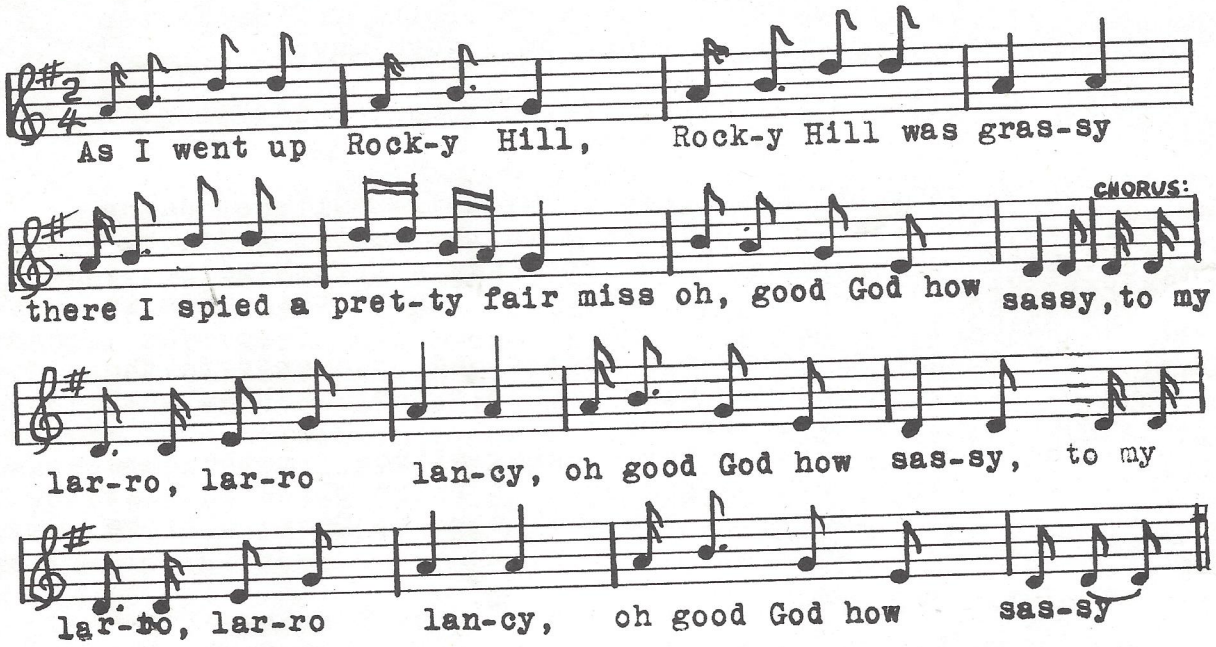
# ROCKY HILL

Collected by Margot from the singing of Rufus Crisp, Allen, Ky.




2. Where you going my pretty little miss,
   where you going Miss Nancy?
   She answered me with a hey, ho,
   "going home to mammy"
   CHORUS: To my larro larro lancy,
   Toddling home to mammy

3. "Marry me, my pretty little miss,
   marry me Miss Nancy
   She answered me, "Hey, law,
   you'll have to ask my mammy"
   CHORUS: To my larro larro lancy
   You'll have to ask my mammy

4. Take my grip-sack on my back,
   musket in my hand
   Marching 'way to New Orleans,
   there to be a soldier
   CHORUS: To my larro, larro lancy,
   Oh, good God how sassy

5. Coffee grows on a white oak tree,
   rivers flow with brandy
   Hills and rocks are lined with gold,
   and girls as sweet as candy
   CHORUS: To my larro, larro lancy,
   Girls as sweet as candy.

# ROBERTSON'S SCHOTTISCHE

We learned this American couple dance from an old-time champion fiddler, Mr. Sanderson, at Swarthmore, Pennsylvania. The melody, transcribed from a recording Mr. Sanderson made for us, was arranged for piano by Gladys Mayo.

FORMATION: Couples, in a circle, facing counterclockwise.
MUSIC: Robertson's Schottische.

A. Partners face each other in regular ballroom dance position, the lady's right hand in the gent's left, his right arm around her waist. The lady's left hand rests on her partner's shoulder. The position of the hands is never changed during this dance.

The couple performs two step-close movements to the gent's left. He starts with his left foot. She starts with her right. (Measure One.)

The couple performs three quick slides, in the same direction, being sure to finish that third slide so that the gent's left foot, and the lady's right foot, will be free. (Measure Two.)

B. The couple performs two waltz steps, turning clockwise, with the gent beginning with his left foot, the lady with her right. The first waltz-step brings them half way around, and the second completes the turn. The couple is now facing in the counterclockwise direction of the dance. (Measure Three.)

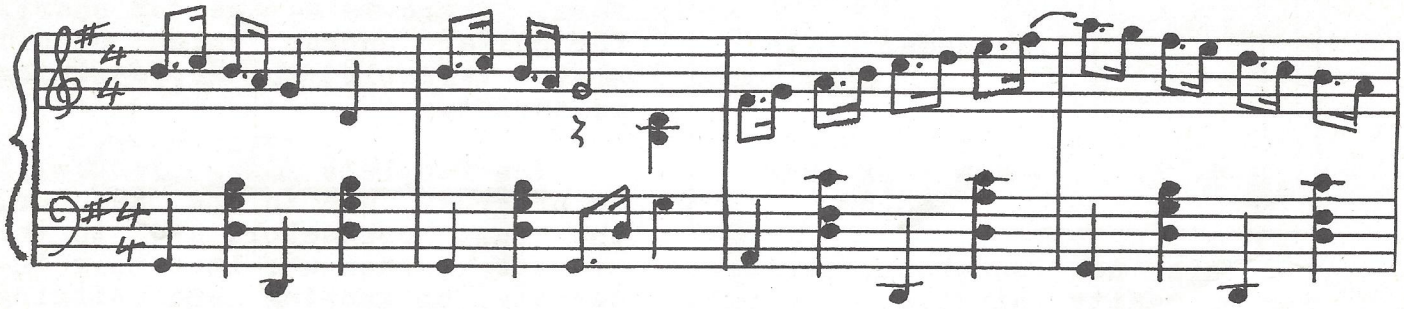
C. The lady turns to face in the opposite direction, and stands out to the right of her partner. The gent is still facing in the direction of the dance. The couple takes four plain walking steps, the gent moving backward and the lady directly forward. The dancers practically retrace their steps. The gent begins with his left foot, and the lady with her right. (Measure Four.)

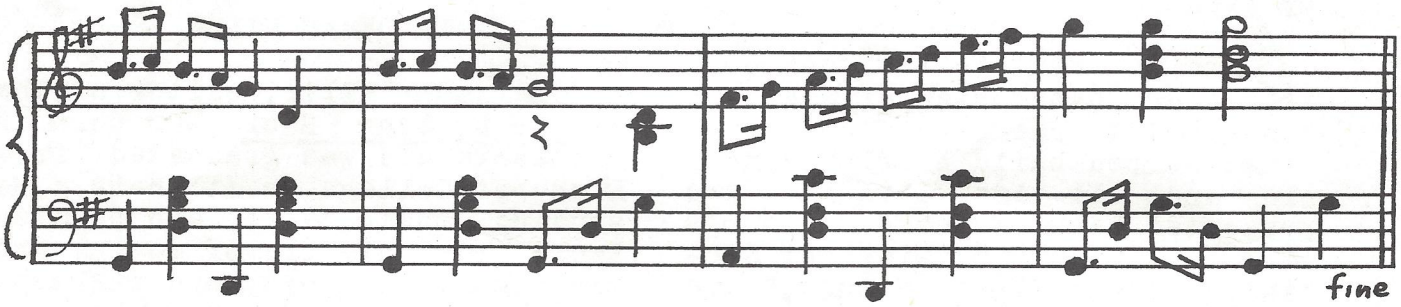
A

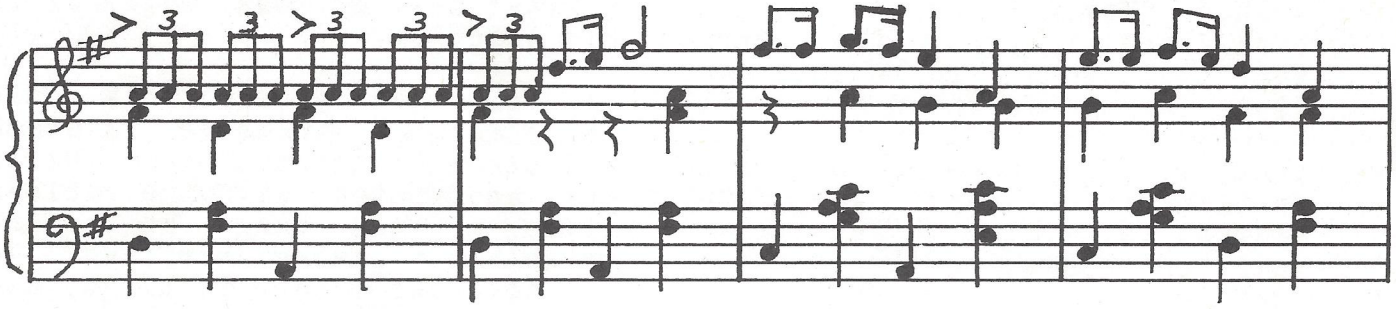
B

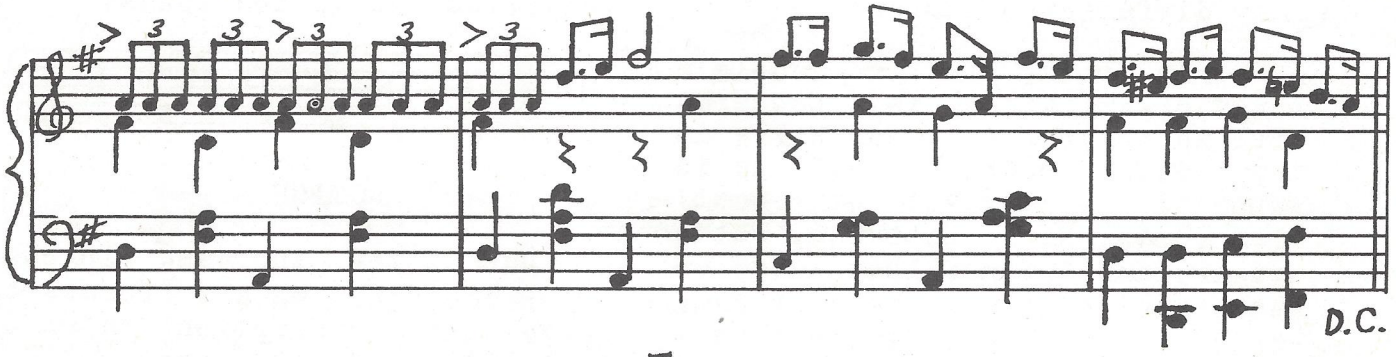
C

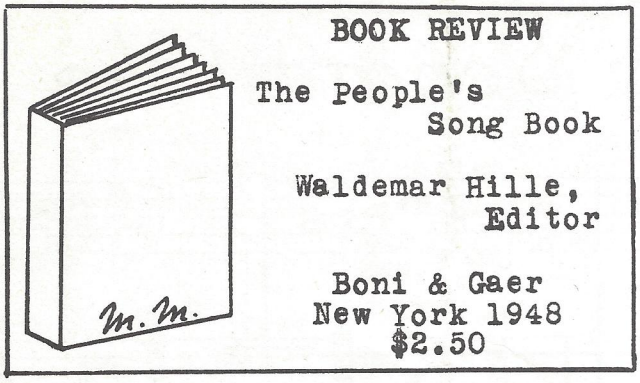
# Robertson's Schottische










This new songbook, arranged for community singing, is a valuable addition to anyone's library. The book is attractive, with its brightly colored jacket and its clear print. There is a preface by Ben Botkin and a foreword by Alan Lomax.

The material in the book covers four categories of American song. Part One includes songs "that helped build America." Many old and all-time favorites are presented here. Beloved folksongs like "John Henry," "Midnight Special," "Take This Hammer," and others appear in this section.

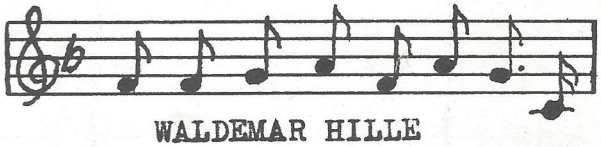
Freedom songs from different nations form Part Two. "Abe Lincoln," "Kevin Barry," "Meadowland," and eighteen other representative songs are in this section. Twenty-two union songs, all more or less familiar but important, are included in the third section of the book. The final section is devoted to topical and political songs, mostly of modern vintage.

In all, there are an even hundred songs in this book, and they are good songs, suitable for many different occasions.

This book, like the People's Songs organization, is a cooperative adventure. Waldemar Hille is the Editor-in-Chief, but he is supported by an all star cast! Alan Lomax, Earl Robinson, Peter Seeger, and Irwin Silber acted as associate editors. Herbert Haufrecht served as consultant editor

The piano accompaniments in the collection have been arranged by various musicians and many of the songs have been set in choral form. There is a page of charts for guitar chords, which should prove valuable to the aspiring guitarist.

The People's Song Book will be of great use to the teacher, the camp counselor, and to the average person who is simply interested in knowing and singing the songs which have helped to build our country.



WALDEMAR HILLE

Waldemar Hille, editor of The People's Song Book, was born in Minnesota and was graduated from Elmhurst College in Illinois. He studied music there, and he also taught the history of music, and the theory of music, and was musical director of several choruses at the college. Mr. Hille, who has collected and studied folklore since 1935, has always used a great deal of folk material in his teaching.

Hille has recorded folk music in Arkansas, Tennessee, Alabama and other Southern states. He is well acquainted with the various types of folk songs which comprise our folksong heritage. He has attended prayer meetings, and visited schools in the South. In the midwest as well as in the South, Mr. Hille is familiar with the people who work on farms, in factories and in the towns.

NOTICE

Due to the increase in cost of production, we are forced to raise the subscription rates of Promenade to $1.50 a year.